Illinois State Board of Education

James T. Meeks
Chairman

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

Dear Families,

The reports that you are receiving reflect your child's individual performance on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. The PARCC assessment serves as an "educational GPS system" that is designed to measure students' current performance in relation to the Illinois Learning Standards, to which the assessment is aligned. It points the way to what students need to learn in order to be ready for the next grade level and, by the end of high school, for future success in college and careers.

The Illinois Learning Standards set high expectations that are focused on critical thinking and real world application. We expect that the more detailed information provided by the PARCC score reports and supporting materials will lead to strong engagement between parents, teachers, and students in support of student learning. We encourage you to talk to your child's teacher about these results and about what you are doing at home to support your child's success.

We must celebrate the good work our teachers and schools are doing to teach the new content critical for the future success of our students. We fully expect students will continue to make progress along the continuum of mastery as they gain additional knowledge related to the standards and become more familiar with the technology.

It is understood that no test can ever fully capture the skills and abilities of a great teacher or the extraordinary benefits and positive impact of a great school. Tests are one measure to help track our progress. Along with other indicators, tests help give us a sense of where and how we are succeeding and where and how we must improve. The PARCC assessment is designed to give schools and teachers more information to support improvement and differentiation in instruction.

Sincerely,

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

ISBE PARCC PLACE at https://www.isbe.net/Pages/PARCC-Place.aspx
PARCC Online at http://parcc-assessment.org/resources/parent-resources
UNDERSTAND THE SCORE at www.understandthescore.org/
CLASSROOMS IN ACTION at www.ilclassroomsinaction.org

Background of the ELA / Literacy Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)

Performance Levels for Reading

The development of the PLDs for **reading** reflect the standards' emphasis on a student's ability to find text-based evidence for generalizations, conclusions, or inferences drawn from text. For the **Reading Claim**, the performance levels at each grade are determined by three factors:

1. Text complexity—the complexity of the text associated with items
2. Accuracy—the level of accuracy that students have demonstrated in their analysis of text; depth of understanding
3. Evidence—the quality of evidence that students use to support their inferences about text

There are a number of different combinations of these three factors that will generate a given performance level for each student. Thus, there are multiple ways to arrive at each performance level.

Performance Levels for Writing

For the **Writing Claim,** PLDs are written for the two sub-claims:

1. Written Expression
2. Knowledge of Language and Conventions

Factors that determine each performance level for writing include **development** of ideas**,** drawing **evidence** from one or more sources, **organization**, and **command** of grammar and usage.

Performance Level Summary for Eighth Grade ELA/Literacy Overview

An abbreviated version of the grade-level PLDs for Reading and Writing are below (some of the descriptors have been changed in order to clarify the language and intent of the PLDs). **For more information and a full version of the PLDs, visit http://parcc-assessment.org/assessments/test-design/ela-literacy/ela-performance-level-descriptors.**

Level 2—A student who achieves at Level 2 partially meets expectations of the grade-level standards for Reading, Writing, and Language and will need academic support to succeed in this content area. The student demonstrates a minimally accurate analysis of a range of complex texts, showing minimal understanding when referring to textual evidence. In writing, the student provides minimal development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, and demonstrates minimal organization. The student demonstrates minimal command of the conventions of grammar and usage.

Level 3—A student who achieves at Level 3 approaches expectations of the grade-level standards for Reading, Writing, and language and will need some academic support to succeed in this content area. The student demonstrates a generally accurate analysis of a range of complex texts, showing basic understanding when referring to textual evidence. In writing, the student provides basic development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, and demonstrates some organization. The student demonstrates basic command of the conventions of grammar and usage.

Level 4 – Language and is prepared to succeed in this content area. The student demonstrates a generally accurate analysis of a range of complex texts, showing general understanding when referring to textual evidence. In writing, the student provides development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, and demonstrates organization. The student demonstrates command of the conventions of grammar and usage.

Level 5—A student who achieves at Level 5 <u>exceeds expectations</u> of the grade-level standards for Reading, Writing, and Language and is <u>well prepared</u> to succeed in this content area. The student demonstrates a <u>mostly accurate</u> analysis of a range of complex texts, showing understanding when referring to textual evidence. In writing, the student provides <u>effective</u> development of ideas, including when using evidence from multiple sources, and demonstrates <u>effective</u> organization. The student demonstrates <u>full</u> command of the conventions of grammar and usage.

Performance Level Summary for Eighth Grade Mathematics

Performance level descriptors (PLDs) indicate what a typical student at each level should be able to demonstrate based on his/her command of grade-level standards. In mathematics, the performance levels at each grade level are written for each of four assessment sub-claims, which are represented on the individual student score report.

Level 2

Sub-claims A and B – Major, additional, and supporting content
- Distinguishes between rational and irrational numbers and approximates their location on a number line.
- Solves linear equations in one variable. Solves mathematical problems leading to pairs of simultaneous linear equations with rational coefficients from a graph.
- Evaluates simple numerical expressions with integer exponents. Using scientific notation, estimates very large quantities.
- Uses the definition of function to distinguish functions from relationships. Identifies a function to model a linear relationship and determines the rate of change or initial value of the function from a table or graph that contains the initial value.
- Describes the effect of translations, rotations or reflections on figures without coordinates, and determines congruency. Solves for the hypotenuse using the Pythagorean Theorem and identifies the volume formula of cones, cylinders and spheres.
- Describes bivariate data.

Sub-claim C – Reasoning
- Uses limited grade-appropriate communication with an intrusive calculation error in tasks that call for written explanations. When a conclusion is required, uses faulty assumptions or provides an incomplete or illogical response.

Sub-claim D – Modeling
- Applies mathematics using assumptions and approximations, identifying important quantities, using provided tools to create models, writing an arithmetic expression or equation, analyzing relationships to draw conclusions.

Level 3

Sub-claims A and B – Major, additional, and supporting content
- Understands that rational and irrational numbers have decimal expansions.
- Solves mathematical problems leading to pairs of simultaneous linear equations with rational coefficients by inspection. Partially solves equations of the forms $x^2 = p,$ where p is a perfect square.
- Using scientific notation performs operations.
- Makes some comparisons of two proportional relationships represented in different ways. Constructs a function to model a linear relationship in a table or graph, analyzes the graph of a linear relationship,
- Applies the Pythagorean Theorem in planar cases without coordinates. Finds the volume of cones, cylinders and spheres.
- Identifies a line of best fit for a scatter plot that suggests a linear association.

Sub-claim C – Reasoning

- Uses some grade-appropriate communication with minor calculation errors. When a conclusion is required, provides a complete response with a partial justification, and evaluates the validity of other's approaches and conclusions.

Sub-claim D – Modeling
- Applies mathematics by illustrating relationships between important quantities to draw conclusions, modifying the model or interpreting mathematical results in a simplified context.

Level 4

Sub-claims A and B – Major, additional, and supporting content
- Converts between terminating decimals or repeating decimals and fractional representations of rational numbers.
- Analyzes and solves mathematical problems leading to linear equations in one variable or to pairs of linear equations, with rational coefficients algebraically. Solves equations of the form $x^3 = p,$ where p is a perfect cube.
- Evaluates and generates equivalent expressions with integer exponents. Using scientific notation, estimates small quantities.
- Compares properties of two functions represented differently. Constructs a function to model a linear relationship in context. Sketches the graph of a linear relationship, and determines the rate of change and initial value from two points or a graph.
- Describes the effect of transformations on figures with coordinates, and determines congruence and similarity. Applies the Pythagorean Theorem in planar cases with coordinates and finds the volume of cones, cylinders and spheres in context.
- Informally fits a straight line to a scatter plot that suggests a linear association.

Sub-claim C – Reasoning
- Uses precision in grade appropriate communication and calculations. When a conclusion is required, provides a well-organized complete response and interprets and critiques the validity of other's reasoning.

Sub-claim D – Modeling
- Applies mathematics by making assumptions and approximations, mapping and analyzing relationships to draw conclusions, selecting appropriate tools to create models, improving the model or interpreting mathematical results.

Level 5

Sub-claims A and B – Major, additional, and supporting content
- Converts between decimal and fractional representations of any rational number.
- Analyzes, solves, and verifies solutions to problems leading to linear equations in one variable or to pairs of linear equations. Solves equations of the form $x^2 = p$ and $x^3 = p,$ representing solutions using $\sqrt{}$ or $\sqrt[3]{}$ symbols.
- Interprets scientific notation in context.
- Identifies and proves functions that are not linear. Analyzes and describes a functional relationship between two quantities, and interprets $y = mx + b$. Uses similar triangles to show that the slope of a line is the same between any two distinct points.
- Describes the sequence of transformations that justify congruence or similarity of two figures. Recognizes and applies the Pythagorean Theorem in 3-D multi-step problems. Applies volume formulas to multiple composite solids.
- Compares and assesses fit of possible linear models for bivariate data that suggests a linear association.

Sub-claim C – Reasoning
- Provides an efficient, logical and complete conclusion. Provides counter-examples where applicable.

Sub-claim D – Modeling
- Applies mathematics by analyzing or creating constraints, relationships, and goals, writing a concise expression or equation and justifying and defending a model.

For more information and a full version of the PLDs, visit http://parcc-assessment.org/assessments/test-design/mathematics/math-performance-level-descriptors.